AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

    This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the

application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

    1. (currently amended)   An electric apparatus comprising:

    a function limiting module for setting a function limit to the electric apparatus so

that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

    an interface for connecting a first external device to the electric apparatus;

    a module for obtaining first device identification information from the first external

device connected via the interface to the electric apparatus to identify the first ~~device~~ external

device;

    a module for associating the function limit with the device identification information

of the first~~a prescribed~~ external device to obtain a cryptographic key;

    a memory for storing the cryptographic key;

    a determining module for determining whether a second device identification

information obtained from a second external device connected via the interface to the electric

apparatus matches the cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

    a limit canceling module for canceling the function limit set by the function limiting

module if the determining module determines that the obtained second device identification

information matches the cryptographic key.

    2. (currently amended) An electric apparatus comprising:

a function limiting module for setting one or more function limits to the electric

apparatus so that at least part of the one or more functions of the electric apparatus become

unavailable;

an interface for connecting ana first external device to the electric apparatus;

a module for obtaining first device identification information from a firstthe external

device connected via the interface to the electric apparatus to identify the first external device;

a module for associating each function limit with the first device identification

information of the first external device to obtain a cryptographic key;

a memory for storing the cryptographic key;

a determining module for determining whether a second device identification

information obtained from a second external device connected via the interface to the electric

apparatus matches the cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling module for canceling each of the one or more function limits set by

the function limiting module if the determining module determines that the obtained second

device information matches the first device identification information associated with the

function limit.

3. (previously presented)   An electric apparatus comprising:

a function limiting module for setting a function limit to the electric apparatus so

that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a plurality of interfaces for connecting external devices to the electric apparatus;

a module for obtaining device identification information from an external device

connected via one of the plurality of interfaces to the electric apparatus to identify the external

device;

a module for associating the function limit with at least one of the device

identification information and a combination of pieces of the device identification and other

device identification information to obtain a cryptographic key;

a memory for storing the cryptographic key;

a determining module for determining whether device identification information

obtained from each of one or more external devices connected via one of the interfaces to the

electric apparatus matches the cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling module for canceling the function limit set by the function limiting

module if the determining module determines that the obtained information from each of the one

or more external devices matches the cryptographic key stored in memory.

4. (previously presented)   An electric apparatus comprising:

a function limiting module for setting a function limit to the electric apparatus so

that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a plurality of interfaces for connecting external devices to the electric apparatus;

a module for obtaining device identification information from an external device

connected via one of the plurality of interfaces to the electric apparatus to identify the external

device;

a module for generating connection route information indicating which interface of the plurality of interfaces is used to connect the external device that has provided the device identification information;

a module for associating the function limit with a combination of the device identification information and connection route information to obtain a cryptographic key;

a memory for storing at least one cryptographic key;

a determining module for determining whether a second combination of device identification information obtained from each external device of one or more external devices connected via one of the interfaces to the electric apparatus and connection route information for each external device of the one or more external devices matches the cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling module for canceling the function limit set by the function limiting module if the determining module determines that the second combination of the obtained device information and connection route information matches the cryptographic key stored in memory.

5. (previously presented)   An electric apparatus comprising:

a function limiting module for setting one or more function limits to the electric apparatus so that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a plurality of interfaces for connecting external devices to the electric apparatus;

a module for obtaining device identification information from an external device connected via one of the plurality of interfaces to the electric apparatus to identify the external device;

a module for associating each function limit of the one or more function limits with at least one of the device identification information and a combination of pieces of the device identification information to thereby obtain a cryptographic key;

a memory for storing at least one cryptographic key;

a determining module for determining whether the device identification information obtained from each external device connected via one of the plurality of interfaces to the electric apparatus matches the cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling module for canceling each function limit set by the function limiting module if the determining module determines that the obtained information matches the cryptographic key related to the function limit.

6. (previously presented)   An electric apparatus comprising:

a function limiting module for setting one or more function limits to the electric apparatus so that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a plurality of interfaces for connecting external devices to the electric apparatus;

a module for obtaining device identification information from an external device connected via one of the plurality of interfaces to the electric apparatus to identify the external device;

a module for generating connection route information indicating which interface of the plurality of interfaces is used to connect the external device that has provided the device identification information;

a module for associating each function limit of the one or more function limits with

a combination of the device identification information and the connection route information to

obtain a cryptographic key;

a memory for storing the cryptographic key;

a determining module for determining whether a second combination of device

identification information obtained from each external device connected via one of the plurality

of interfaces to the electric apparatus and connection route information for each external device

matches the cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling module for canceling each function limit set by the function

limiting module if the determining module determines that the combination of the obtained

information and connection route information matches the cryptographic key related to the

function limit.

7. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 1, further

comprising a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the

external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is

capable of storing information.

8. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 2, further

comprising a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the

external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is

capable of storing information.

9. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 3, further comprising a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is capable of storing information.

10. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 4, further comprising a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is capable of storing information.

11. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 5, further comprising a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is capable of storing information.

12. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 6, further comprising a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is capable of storing information.

13. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 1, further comprising a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

14. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 2, further comprising a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

15. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 3, further comprising a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

16. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 4, further comprising a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

17. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 5, further comprising a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

18. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 6, further comprising a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

19. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 1, further comprising:

a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is capable of storing information; and

a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

20. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 2, further comprising:

a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is capable of storing information; and

a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

21. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 3, further comprising:

a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is capable of storing information; and

a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

22. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 4, further comprising:

a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is capable of storing information; and

a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

23. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 5, further comprising:

a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is capable of storing information; and

a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

24. (previously presented) The electric apparatus claimed in claim 6, further comprising:

a module for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information if the external device is capable of storing information; and

a module for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining module made the determination.

25. (previously presented) A method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus including an interface to connect an external device thereto, comprising:

a function limiting step for setting a function limit to the electric apparatus so that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device identification information from an external device connected via the interface to the electric apparatus to identify the external device;

a step for associating the function limit with the device identification information obtained at the first device identification information obtaining step to obtain a cryptographic key;

a step for storing the cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining a second device identification information from a second external device connected via the interface to the electric apparatus to identify the second external device;

a determining step for determining whether the second device identification information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling the function limit set at the function limiting step if it is determined at the determining step that the second device identification information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches the cryptographic key.

26. (previously presented) A method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus including an interface to connect an external device thereto, comprising:

a function limiting step for setting one or more function limits to the electric apparatus so that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device identification information from an external device connected via the interface to the electric apparatus to identify the device;

a step for associating each function limit of the one or more function limits with the device identification information of the external device to obtain a cryptographic key;

a step for storing the cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining a second device identification information from a second external device connected via the interface to the electric equipment to identify the second external device;

a determining step for determining whether the second device identification information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches the cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling each function limit of the one or more function limits set at the function limiting step if it is determined at the determining step that the second device identification information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches the cryptographic key related to the function limit.

27. (previously presented) A method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus including a plurality of interfaces to connect external devices thereto, comprising:

a function limiting step for setting a function limit to the electric apparatus so that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device identification information from an external device connected via one of the plurality of interfaces to the electric equipment to identify the external device;

a step for associating the function limit with at least one of the device identification information and a combination of pieces of the device identification information to obtain a cryptographic key;

a step for storing the cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining second device identification information from each of one or more external devices connected via one of the plurality of interfaces to the electric apparatus to identify each of the one or more external devices;

a determining step for determining whether at least one of the second device identification information and a combination of pieces of the second device identification information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches the cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling the function limit set at the function limiting step if it is determined at the determining step that the second device identification information

obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches the

cryptographic key.

28. (previously presented) A method for preventing the unauthorized use of an

electric apparatus including a plurality of interfaces to connect external devices thereto,

comprising:

a function limiting step for setting a function limit to the electric apparatus so that at

least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device

identification information from an external device connected via one of the interfaces to the

electric equipment to identify the external device;

a first connection route information generating step for generating first connection

route information indicating which interface is used to connect the external device to the electric

apparatus at the first device identification information obtaining step;

a step for associating the function limit with a combination of the device

identification information and the connection route information to obtain a cryptographic key;

a step for storing the cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining second

device identification information from a second external device connected via one of the

interfaces to the electric apparatus to identify the second external device;

a second connection route information generating step for generating second

connection route information indicating which interface is used to connect the second external

device to the electric apparatus at the second device identification information obtaining step;

a determining step for determining whether a second combination of the second device identification information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step and the second connection route information matches the cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling the function limit set at the function limiting step if it is determined at the determining step that the second combination of the information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step and the second connection route information matches the cryptographic key.

29. (previously presented) A method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus including a plurality of interfaces to connect external devices thereto, comprising:

a function limiting step for setting one or more function limits to the electric apparatus so that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device identification information from an external device connected via one of the interfaces to the electric apparatus to identify the external device;

a step for associating each function limit of the one or more function limits with the device identification information or a combination of pieces of the device identification information to obtain a cryptographic key;

a step for storing the cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining a second

device identification information from a second external device connected via one of the

interfaces to the electric apparatus to identify the second external device;

a determining step for determining whether at least one of the second device

identification information and a combination of pieces of the second device identification

information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches the

cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling each function limit of the one or more function

limits set at the function limiting step if it is determined at the determining step that the second

information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches the

cryptographic key related to the function limit.

30. (previously presented) A method for preventing the unauthorized use of an

electric apparatus including a plurality of interfaces to connect external devices thereto,

comprising:

a function limiting step for setting one or more function limits to the electric

apparatus so that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device

identification information from an external device connected via one of the interfaces to the

electric apparatus to identify the external device;

a first connection route information generating step for generating first connection

route information indicating which interface is used to connect the external device to the electric

apparatus at the first device identification information obtaining step;

a step for associating a function limit of the one or more function limits with a

combination of the device identification information and the first connection route information to

obtain a cryptographic key;

a step for storing the cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining second

device identification information from a second external device connected via one of the

interfaces to the electric apparatus to identify the second external device;

a second connection route information generating step for generating second

connection route information indicating which interface of the plurality of interfaces is used to

connect the second external device to the electric apparatus at the second device identification

information obtaining step;

a determining step for determining whether at least one of a second combination of

the second device identification information obtained at the second device identification

information obtaining step and the second connection route information matches the

cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling each function limit of the one or more function

limits set at the function limiting step if it is determined at the determining step that the second

combination of the information obtained at the second device identification information

obtaining step and the second connection route information matches the cryptographic key

related to the function limit.

31. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an

electric apparatus claimed in claim 25, further comprising a step for having the external device

store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device

identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the

external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information

obtaining step is capable of storing information.

32. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an

electric apparatus claimed in claim 26, further comprising a step for having the external device

store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device

identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the

external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information

obtaining step is capable of storing information.

33. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an

electric apparatus claimed in claim 27, further comprising a step for having the external device

store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device

identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the

external device connected to the electronic apparatus at the first device identification information

obtaining step is capable of storing information.

34. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an

electric apparatus claimed in claim 28, further comprising a step for having the external device

store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device

identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the

external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information

obtaining step is capable of storing information.

35. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an

electric apparatus claimed in claim 29, further comprising a step for having the external device

store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device

identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the

external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information

obtaining step is capable of storing information.

36. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an

electric apparatus claimed in claim 30, further comprising a step for having the external device

store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device

identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the

external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information

obtaining step is capable of storing information.

37. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an

electric apparatus claimed in claim 25, further comprising a step for resetting the function limit if

a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

38. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus claimed in claim 26, further comprising a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

39. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus claimed in claim 27, further comprising a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

40. (previously presented) he method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus claimed in claim 28, further comprising a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

41. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus claimed in claim 29, further comprising a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

42. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus claimed in claim 30, further comprising a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

43. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus claimed in claim 25, further comprising:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

44. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus claimed in claim 26, further comprising:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

45. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus claimed in claim 27, further comprising:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

46. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus claimed in claim 28, further comprising:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

47. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus claimed in claim 29, further comprising:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as corresponding to the device identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

48. (previously presented) The method for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus claimed in claim 30, further comprising:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the

external device as corresponding to the device identification information after the first device

identification information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus

at the first device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after

the determining step.

49. (currently amended) A program recorded on a computer storagereadable

medium for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus, which is built into the

electric apparatus including an interface to connect an external device thereto, and the program

enabling a computer to control the electric apparatus, wherein the program includes the steps of:

a function limiting step for setting a function limit to the electric apparatus so that at

least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device

identification information from an external device connected via the interface to the electric

apparatus to identify the external device;

a step for associating the function limit with the device identification information

obtained at the first device identification information obtaining step to obtain a cryptographic

key;

a step for storing the cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining second

device identification information from a second external device connected via the interface to the

electric equipment to identify the second external device;

a determining step for determining whether the second device identification

information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches the

cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling the function limit set at the function limiting step

if it is determined at the determining step that the second device identification information

obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches the

cryptographic key.

50. (currently amended) A program recorded on a computer storagereadable

medium for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus, which is built into the

electric apparatus including an interface to connect an external device thereto, and the program

enabling a computer to control the electric apparatus, wherein the program includes the steps of:

a function limiting step for setting one or more function limits to the electric

apparatus so that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device

identification information from an external device connected via the interface to the electric

apparatus to identify the device;

a step for associating each function limit of the one or more function limits with the

device identification information of the external device to obtain a cryptographic key;

a step for storing the cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining a second

device identification information from a second external device connected via the interface to the

electric equipment to identify the second external device;

a determining step for determining whether the second device identification

information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches the

cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling each function limit of the one or more function

limits set at the function limiting step if it is determined at the determining step that the second

device identification information obtained at the second device identification information

obtaining step matches the cryptographic key related to the function limit.

51. (currently amended) A program recorded on a computer storage~~readable~~

medium for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus, which is built into the

electric apparatus including a plurality of interfaces to connect external devices thereto, and the

program enabling a computer to control the electric apparatus, wherein the program includes the

steps of:

a function limiting step for setting a function limit to the electric apparatus so that at

least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device

identification information from an external device connected via one of the plurality of interfaces

to the electric apparatus to identify the external device;

a step for associating the function limit with at least one of the device identification

information and a combination of pieces of the device identification information to obtain a

cryptographic key;

a step for storing the cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining second

device identification information from a second external device connected via one of the

plurality of interfaces to the electric apparatus to identify the second external device;

a determining step for determining whether at least one of the second device

identification information and the combination of pieces of the second device identification

information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step matches the

cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling the function limit of the one or more function

limits set at the function limiting step if it is determined at the determining step that the second

device identification information obtained at the second device identification information

obtaining step matches the cryptographic key.

52. (currently amended) A program recorded on a computer storage~~readable~~

medium for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus, which is built into the

electric apparatus including a plurality of interfaces to connect external devices thereto, and the

program enabling a computer to control the electric apparatus, wherein the program includes the

steps of:

a function limiting step for setting a function limit to the electric equipment so that

at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device

identification information from an external device connected via one of the plurality of interfaces

to the electric apparatus to identify the external device;

a first connection route information generating step for generating first connection route information indicating which interface of the plurality of interfaces is used to connect the external device to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information obtaining step;

a step for associating the function limit with a combination of the device identification information and the connection route information to obtain a cryptographic key;

a step for storing the cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining a second device identification information from a second external device connected via one of the plurality of interfaces to the electric apparatus to identify the second external device;

a second connection route information generating step for generating second connection route information indicating which interface of he plurality of interfaces is used to connect the second external device to the electric apparatus at the second device identification information obtaining step;

a determining step for determining whether a second combination of the second device identification information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step and the second connection route information matches the cryptographic key stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling the function limit of the one or more function limits set at the function limiting step if it is determined at the determining step that the second combination of the information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step and the second connection route information matches the cryptographic key.

53. (currently amended) A program recorded on a computer storagereadable

medium for preventing the unauthorized use of electric equipment, which is built into the electric

apparatus including a plurality of interfaces to connect external devices thereto, and the program

enabling a computer to control the electric apparatus, wherein the program includes the steps of:

a function limiting step for setting one or more function limits to the electric

equipment so that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device

identification information from each external device connected via one of the interfaces to the

electric equipment to identify the device;

a step for associating each function limit with the specific device identification

information or a combination of plural pieces of specific device identification information to

thereby obtain a cryptographic key;

a step for storing the cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device

identification information from each external device connected via one of the interfaces to the

electric apparatus to identify the device;

a determining step for determining whether the device identification information or

a combination of plural pieces of device identification information obtained at the second device

identification information obtaining step matches the device identification information of any

one of the cryptographic keys stored in the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling each function limit set at the function limiting

step if it is determined at the determining step that the information obtained at the second device

identification information obtaining step matches the device identification information of the

cryptographic key related to the function limit.

54. (currently amended) A program recorded on a computer storage~~readable~~

medium for preventing the unauthorized use of an electric apparatus, which is built into the

electric apparatus including a plurality of interfaces to connect external devices thereto, and the

program enabling a computer to control the electric apparatus, wherein the program includes the

steps of:

a function limiting step for setting one or more function limits to the electric

equipment so that at least part of functions of the electric apparatus become unavailable;

a first device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device

identification information from each external device connected via one of the interfaces to the

electric apparatus to identify the device;

a first connection route information generating step for generating first connection

route information indicating which interface is used to connect the external device to the electric

apparatus at the first device identification information obtaining step;

a step for associating the function limit with a combination of prescribed device

identification information and the first connection route information to thereby obtain a

cryptographic key;

a step for storing at least one cryptographic key in a memory;

a second device identification information obtaining step for obtaining device

identification information from each external device connected via one of the interfaces to the

electric apparatus to identify the device;

a second connection route information generating step for generating second

connection route information indicating which interface is used to connect the external device to

the electric apparatus at the second device identification information obtaining step;

a determining step for determining whether a combination of the device

identification information obtained at the second device identification information obtaining step

and the second connection route information matches any one of the cryptographic keys stored in

the memory; and

a limit canceling step for canceling each function limit set at the function limiting

step if it is determined at the determining step that the combination of the information obtained at

the second device identification information obtaining step and the second connection route

information matches the cryptographic key related to the function limit.

55. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer storagereadable

medium claimed in claim 49,~ wherein the program comprises the further step of having the

external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as the device

identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the

external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information

obtaining step is capable of storing information.

56. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer storagereadable

medium claimed in claim 50, wherein the program comprises the further step of having the

external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as the device

identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the

external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information

obtaining step is capable of storing information.

57. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer storagereadable

medium claimed in claim 51, wherein the program comprises the further step of having the

external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as the device

identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the

external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information

obtaining step is capable of storing information.

58. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer storagereadable

medium claimed in claim 52, wherein the program comprises the further step of having the

external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as the device

identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the

external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information

obtaining step is capable of storing information.

59. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer storagereadable

medium claimed in claim 53, wherein the program comprises the further step of having the

external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as the device

identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the

external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information

obtaining step is capable of storing information.

60. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer ~~storage~~readable medium claimed in claim 54, wherein the program comprises the further step of having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as the device identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information.

61. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer ~~storage~~readable medium claimed in claim 49, wherein the program comprises the further step of resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

62. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer ~~storage~~readable medium claimed in claim 50, wherein the program comprises the further step of resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

63. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer ~~storage~~readable medium claimed in claim 51, wherein the program comprises the further step of resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

64. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer ~~storage~~readable medium claimed in claim 52, wherein the program comprises the further step of resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

65. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer ~~storage~~readable medium claimed in claim 53, wherein the program includes the further step of resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

66. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer ~~storage~~readable medium claimed in claim 54, wherein the program comprises the further step of resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

67. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer ~~storage~~readable medium claimed in claim 49, wherein the program comprises the further steps of:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as the device identification information after the first device identification information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after the determining step.

68. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer ~~storage~~readable medium claimed in claim 50, wherein the program comprises the further steps of:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the external device as the device identification information after the first device identification

information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first

device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after

the determining step.

69. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer storage~~readable~~

medium claimed in claim 51, wherein the program comprises further steps of:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the

external device as the device identification information after the first device identification

information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first

device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after

the determining step.

70. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer storage~~readable~~

medium claimed in claim 52, wherein the program comprises the further steps of:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the

external device as the device identification information after the first device identification

information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first

device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after

the determining step.

71. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer storagereadable

medium claimed in claim 53, wherein the program comprises the further steps of:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the

external device as the device identification information after the first device identification

information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first

device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after

the determining step.

72. (currently amended) The program recorded on a computer storagereadable

medium claimed in claim 54, wherein the program comprises the further steps of:

a step for having the external device store information that uniquely identifies the

external device as the device identification information after the first device identification

information obtaining step if the external device connected to the electric apparatus at the first

device identification information obtaining step is capable of storing information; and

a step for resetting the function limit if a prescribed period of time has passed after

the determining step.